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UNCLAS SANAA 002891

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/PPD, R, IIP, PA, AND DRL/IRF

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KIRF](#) [KPAO](#) [PREL](#) [COUNTER TERRORISM](#) [DOMESTIC](#) [POLITICS](#) [DEMOCRATIC REFORM](#)

SUBJECT: RAMADAN 2005 PD ACTIVITIES

REF: SECSTATE 166527

1. SUMMARY: Ramadan celebrations in Yemen are typically hosted within families and, while Yemenis generally prefer to remain at home and close to family during the month, Embassy Sana'a has planned to participate in Ramadan in a variety of ways. End summary.

2. Ambassador will host well-positioned contacts, including ROYG officials, media representatives, academicians, and USG program alumni at a local restaurant for an iftar on October 11. Ambassador will deliver brief remarks to the assembled guests alluding to Ramadan as a time of introspection and highlighting the USG's history of religious and cultural tolerance. A PowerPoint slideshow about Muslim life in the United States will run throughout the iftar event on a large screen. Guests will receive a business card handout listing IIP's Arabic-language websites sites on BMENA issues, Muslim life in America, and combating terror.

3. The political section will also meet throughout the month, after iftar mealtime, in casual settings with contacts. During these informal sessions, emboffs will engage in active listening and will produce reporting cables on major themes raised by contacts. Emboffs will use these events to advance USG policy goals related to counterterrorism, regional security, democratic and economic reform by discussing issues resonant in Yemen such as:

- upcoming presidential elections;
- recent parliamentary session;
- effectiveness of ROYG efforts to reform those with extremist views;
- effects of terror on innocent victims of terrorist incidents;
- and, public opinion among Yemenis regarding terrorist acts, terrorist organizations, and USG policy.

4. Public Affairs, in cooperation with the local NGO Al Sada Charitable Association, will provide a weekly iftar dinner during the month for a marginalized group of Yemenis known as "akhdams" (members of this minority typically encumber only the lowest paying jobs). Public Affairs staff and volunteers from among the Muslim-American Embassy staff will be available to assist in serving the guests and to engage guests in dialogue. A banner indicating the Embassy's sponsorship will be hung. At the end of the meal, children will receive bookbags containing foodstuffs for their families.

5. CLO is collecting donations of money and foodstuffs to prepare Ramadan baskets for less privileged Yemenis. Delivery will be accomplished through a local NGO.

6. Public Affairs will send press releases and post official USG Ramadan greetings online as well as forward Ramadan-related IIP materials to the local media.

KRAJESKI